

COBBETT'S WEEKLY POLITICAL REGISTER.

Vol. 86.—No. 13.] LONDON, SATURDAY, DECEMBER 27TH, 1834. [Price 1s. 2d.



LETTER I.

TO

SIR ROBERT PEEL, BART.,

PRIME MINISTER,

FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY, AND
CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER,

ON HIS

MINISTERIAL MANIFESTO.

Wolseley Hall, 21. Dec., 1834.

SIR,—I have read, with great attention and care, your address to your constituents, the electors of Tamworth, which is, in the true sense of the word, a **MANIFESTO** of the new Ministry; that is to say, a setting forth, or a declaring, of the intended proceedings of that Ministry, and of the principles and grounds of those proceedings: and I think it right, while I convey this manifesto to my constituents of Oldham and to the public at large, to convey to them, through the same channel (numbering the paragraphs as I proceed), my observations on the contents of that manifesto.

PARAGRAPH 1. "The formation of a new *Government*" is a phrase quite improper to be used by a person in your dignified situation, and on an occasion so solemn as this. It is not a "*new Government*"; it is no Government at all; it is an assemblage of men, whom the King has chosen for *his servants* instead of the servants whom he lately had. And, though talking of "*Lord GREY'S Government*," "*Lord MELBOURNE'S Government*," and "*Sir Ro-*

BERT PEEL'S Government," is not sedition, and is nothing more than slang used by the clerks in office, when they assemble together to munch their mutton chop and look wise; it is, nevertheless, a phrase degrading to the King, and to that real Government, which consists of King, Lords, and Commons. The last sentence of this paragraph tells us, that you did not place at the disposal of the King your services, until *after* you had taken an anxious view of the position of public affairs. I should not have liked this, if I had been King; I should have liked, a great deal better, to have had an instant offer of services; an instant offer to stand by me; and then, "an anxious review of the position of public affairs."

PARAGRAPH 2. Now, sir, do not you see here, how the King has lost power, and how his servants have lost efficiency, by the breach of the bargain which was made between the people and this family? That bargain was, that no one holding a pension, or place of profit under the crown, should have a seat in the House of Commons. This was provided for by the 12. and 13. of William and Mary; but this part of this, the **ACT OF SETTLEMENT**, was afterward's repealed, to the very great and notorious injury of the people. And, now, it is manifestly an injury to the King; and, in effect, cuts off a part of his prerogative of choosing his own servants; for, though his prerogative allows him to choose you, for instance, you must go and ask leave of the people of TAMWORTH, before you can serve him, seeing that the manner of carrying on the Government now requires your presence in Parliament! While boroughmongering lasted, there was no inconvenience attending this; but now there is great inconvenience; and, for want of adherence to the Act of Settlement, this inconvenience has arisen. And, why not exclude all the servants of the King from the House of Commons, agreeably to the Act of Settlement? It would require

a dissertation of some length, to show clearly all the advantages which would arise from such a change, as well to the King himself and his servants, as to the people at large. Those servants being in the House of Commons makes no part of the constitution of this country. The House does not recognise them *as such*; the House knows them only as members of Parliament. As a Privy Councillor; as a person occupying a high office of state, you are greatly the superior of the members of the House in general: but *in that House*, you are exactly upon a level with the rest of us; and the House loses, and greatly loses, in weight and authority with the people by there being a bench called "*the Treasury Bench*"; and by all the *preferences* and *advantages*, which it is the custom to give to that bench: the laws are not received with half the reverence, with which they would be received, if it did not seem to be a thing taken for granted, that no bill can ever succeed, unless it be brought in by, or have the consent of, the servants of the King.

PARAGRAPH 3. Here you see the difficulty arising out of this inconsistent state of things; for you so confound here your character of representative with that of Minister, that this paragraph is altogether illogical. After describing the nature of the declaration that you are making, you tell the people of TAMWORTH, that they are entitled to receive from you, a full and unreserved declaration of your principles as a Minister of the crown. And *why* are they *so entitled*? Because, forsooth, you are their *member of Parliament*; because you have long been in habits of friendly intercourse with them; and because they stood by you in times of difficulty. These are very good reasons for making a frank declaration of your future intentions, as a *member of Parliament*; but no reason whatever for your selecting them as a channel, through which to make this general manifesto. I know you use the word "*also*" at the beginning of the second sentence of this paragraph; but that word "*also*" does not take away the

force of the word "*this*" which is the fifth word from the beginning of the first sentence of this paragraph, and which word "*this*" represents the whole subject of the manifesto. I do not say this in the way of capping at the composition of the manifesto; but for the purpose of showing how difficult it is for even the greatest master of words to get along amidst the performance of such a confusion of duties and of characters.

PARAGRAPH 4. The duties that you will have to perform "*are arduous*"; you yourself certainly have *not sought* them; though, if I had been in your place, I would have sought them, seeing the situation in which I saw the King. Certainly you are correct in your view of the object and effect of the Reform Bill, as to this matter; and that man would deserve to be hanged who approved of the Reform Bill, if he deemed it calculated to have the effect of nullifying the prerogative of the King. I am sorry to have any thing to stop me in so good a paragraph as this; but, sir, you say, that you found the King in a crisis of "*great difficulty*"; and in other parts you appear to be placing on the credit side of your account a large sum for the difficulties, which the carrying on of the executive part of the Government presents to you. But, sir, *what are these difficulties*? We have had twenty years of profound peace, at the end of a war of "*victory*," of "*glory*," and of "*conquest*." We have now profound peace with all the world; we have prodigiously increased, and increasing, manufactures; in imports and exports an increase equally prodigious. We have roads, so improved as to make space not half what it was. We have canals that run under mountains and over turnpike roads. We have railroads and steam-engines, that literally move as swiftly as the wind, and that almost realize the fabled prayer to JUPITER, "*to annihilate both space and time, to make two lovers happy*." We have more "*CAPITAL*" than all the rest of the world put together! Now, then, sir, what can be the difficulties which you can possibly have descried, in the

carrying on of the affairs of a nation like this? I might stop here, and wait for a reply; but I will not. The truth is, that there *are difficulties* after all. But then, there is this to be said, that you yourself have had as much to do in the creating of them as any man who is now in existence. The difficulties are purely of a *pecuniary* description, or having their rise in that source. Your father supported PITT and ADDINGTON; you yourself supported PERCEVAL; you partook in power with LIVERPOOL; you took into your own hands the great fiscal affairs, fifteen years ago; you were, in fact, chief ruler from 1822 to November 1830; you made a new and terrible criminal code yourself, by which you moulded trespasses into misdemeanours, and misdemeanours into felonies; and, in some cases, simple civil wrongs into felonies; you yourself introduced a Bourbon-police; you have now voted for a total revolution in that great law, called the POOR-LAW. You come to the concern, therefore, just as you left it; or just as you have assisted to make it by the POOR-LAW BILL. So that you have no difficulties that you have not created yourself, or assisted to create; and, had you shrunk from the call of the King, you never could have held up your head in England again. You are the very man of all men, whom it became to devote yourself to the service of the King at this time; the very man of all men, that the people ought to wish to see in the possession of full and ample power. You now hold the three offices, Prime Minister, First Lord of the Treasury, Chancellor of the Exchequer. When the powers were divided, it was a poor thing, compared to this; when there was "the Minister" in one House, and the "leader" in the other House; then there was a division of authority and responsibility that puzzled men; that divided the responsibility and the force of attack. Now we have but one point to look to. There lies the patient, committed *solely* to your care; you are physician, surgeon, and apothecary, as well as the chief creator of the malady. Cure the pa-

tient, and receive your boundless reward in the praises of twenty millions of grateful people! But do not quit him; do not give him over and leave him; if you cannot cure, see him fairly into his coffin, follow him to his grave, and boldly say, "Ashes to ashes, and dust to dust." Any thing, in such a case, is better than a *retreat*!

PARAGRAPH 5. This paragraph seems to indicate that you have great doubts with regard to your being able to conduct the affairs of the country with "*vigour and success*." And why "*vigour*"? "*Vigour*" seems to be a strange word to apply to the manner of conducting the civil affairs of a government. One would have thought that Lord GREY's everlasting talk about "*vigour*" would have been a warning to you; especially when viewed in conjunction with the *final effects* of that vigour. There was no occasion for any word at all here, besides that of *success*; but, if there must needs be another word to round the sentence, *mildness*, or *gentleness*, or some other such word, would have been a great deal better, at this time, than *vigour*. Ah, sir! be vigorous with the *bushel of wheat*! I laugh all other vigour to scorn. The people despise the *menace*; and, if you be wise, you will talk little about *vigour*. The threatening tone of the KING'S SPEECHES (which has been in them all for forty-four years) has done a great deal in the producing of your present difficulties. The people do not care a straw for your "*VIGOUR*."

PARAGRAPH 6. This paragraph ought not to have been here, unless you had made an *explicit* declaration of principle *all the way through*.

PARAGRAPHS 7, 8, and 9. Certainly, no man, in his senses, ever supposed that your having opposed the Reform Bill was to make it inconsistent in you to carry on the affairs of government in conformity with that bill. No man, whose opinions are worth a moment's attention, ever supposed such a thing. No man in America ever censured Mr. JEFFERSON, or Mr. MADISON, because they opposed, almost "to the death," the British treaty of 1794, and

afterwards carried it most scrupulously into effect, and adhered to it rigidly till it expired. You might have saved yourself the trouble of scouting the idea, that to do this would be *apostacy*; for every sensible man in the kingdom laughed at the ridiculous notion. But, sir, in Par. 7, you appeal (for a proof that you are no enemy to *reform of abuses*) to your conduct with regard to the CURRENCY, to the CRIMINAL LAW, and some other things, of all which I shall have to speak presently.

PARAGRAPH 10. You here tell us, that, as to adopting the spirit of the Reform Bill, you will not do any thing which shall amount to an abandonment of a respect for *ancient rights*, and a deference to "*prescriptive authority*." Now, sir, though you do not say it, you here clearly give it to be understood, that a considerable part of the people, or, at least, some of them, wish for a continual series of changes; an abrogation of *ancient rights*, and a disregard of all *prescriptive authority*. Where do you find these people, sir? I have been a very attentive observer of the changes made within the last forty years: of the abrogation of *ancient rights*; and of the many instances in which *prescriptive authority* has been disregarded. I have known all along the actors, as well as the acts; and, sir, after a couple of days of thinking about the matter, and after having twice consulted my pillow upon it, I would, if necessary, declare upon my oath, that I know of no man, by whose acts and by whose votes so many *ancient rights* have been abrogated, and *prescriptive authority* disregarded in so many instances, as by your acts and your votes. I will not attempt to give, here, a list of the abrogations and the disregardings; just to name the new misdemeanours, the new felonies, the new trespass law, the Bourbon-police, the transportation for being in pursuit of game, which last is exclusively your own, the late Ministers having taken it out of the law, and you having pressed them to put it back again; and, as being enough for the present, your, and the Duke of WEL- LINGTON's support of the POOR-LAW

BILL. Why, in this case, there is not only a want of respect for *ancient rights*, but a total disregard of *prescriptive authority*. The *trial by jury* is a pretty *ancient right*, and has something like *prescription* to plead in its support; and I do verily believe, that not one single day in the year passes over our heads, Sundays excepted, without the passing of many judicial decisions, contrary to that *ancient right*, that *prescriptive authority*; and that, too, in consequence of measures introduced by you yourself, and carried through by the Parliament, of which you approved! Therefore, sir, I will never stand, or sit, silently, and hear THE PEOPLE represented as wishing to set *ancient rights* and *prescriptive authority* at defiance; when I know, that every thing which has been done in this way, has been done *against the will*, and solely *against the will*, of the people: when I know, that during my long war against power; that, during that war, in which I have seen out ~~such~~ Prime Ministers, I, and that portion of the people that has been with me, have always been contending FOR *ancient rights* and *prescriptive authority*, and against INNOVATIONS; and that we are now contending *against* innovations; and we challenge any one to prove to the contrary. I leave this point for the present, with just observing, that it would be wise in those, whose lives have been spent in abrogating *ancient rights*, and in setting *prescriptive authority* at defiance, to say as little about the matter as possible, especially at a crisis like this, when men's minds are quite enough set afloat by the principles, which the POOR-LAW BILL has compelled us to bring into discussion. I will just observe here, however, that it seems necessary to be a little more definite than you have been, as to what ARE *ancient rights* and *prescriptive authority*; for your supporter the *Standard* now calls the MALT-TAX a thing which has "*PRESCRIPTIVE AUTHORITY*"? To be sure, 6d. the bushel was laid on 140 years ago; but the 2s. 1d. has a "*prescriptive authority*" of only about 39 years! And, yet, I dare say your par-

tisans will soon find out, that 39 years a good time to establish a prescription against the people's purses or their persons; while no length of time is sufficient to establish a prescription in their favour. Ah, sir! the time is passed for *insolence* like this. The POOR-LAW BILL has challenged every drop of blood in our veins; and we will now make these insolent men see, and make their patrons *feel*, that we know well what "PRESCRIPTIVE AUTHORITY" is.

PARAGRAPHS 11, 12, 13, and 14. These paragraphs present nothing which calls for particular remark, except that every body will here perceive, that this vague, unmeaning, useless, corporation-commission is still to remain a charge upon the country: and this leaves us too much reason to suppose, that the labourer's earnings are still to be taken away to support these hordes of commissioners; and that I was mistaken when I, in my letter of thanks to the King for turning out the late Ministers, expressed, by implication, an opinion, that the carrying on of the Government by detached parcels of irresponsible power would now be put an end to. It is still to be Whig-government in this respect, at any rate!

PARAGRAPHS 15, 16, 17, and 18. Here we have what the Dissenters are to expect from this new Ministry; and you propose to go, with regard to them, just as far as the Whigs proposed to go, and no farther. There are three distinct points, *church-rates, marriages, universities*; and you tell us, that you agreed with the late Ministers, as to the two former; and leave the Dissenters to infer, that you will do, in the two former cases, what the late Ministers proposed to do; but that, in the latter case, you will not go quite so far. As to the two former, you tell us, that is enough for you to state *what you did*; that is to say, the Dissenters may judge of what you will do, by what you have done; and I might content myself here with saying, that we may judge of what the Dissenters will do, by what they have done; that is to say, regard both these measures, of which you approved, as the grossest of insults. I, for my own

part, do not think that they were intended as insults; but I know that they were both the effect of as great foolishness as I ever witnessed in my whole life; besides the first of them being most glaringly unjust. What, sir! talk of *easing* the Dissenters; *relieving* them from church-rates, by making them pay those rates in excise-duties, stamp-duties, and window-duties! Is it for a "statesman" to talk thus? But this is not the worst of the proposition. The church-rates are now paid by the owners and occupiers of *real property*; and, therefore, by persons of some substance. Adopt your project, and they fall upon the people who have *nothing but* their labour, and to whom you, and the Whigs too, *deny the right of voting at elections*! The Dissenters, to their great honour, rejected this proposition with scorn. They dashed aside the poisoned chalice, and you would again tender it to their lips. As to the MARRIAGE-BILL, if it had become law, it would, in effect, though not in name, have given the Government a control as to the *places of worship*, and as to the *selection of Ministers*; this the Dissenters saw; and, therefore, they rejected this bill, which also you would tender them again! With regard to the UNIVERSITIES, I always blamed the Dissenters for asking for the *mere admission to take degrees*. They were always beaten; and always must be beaten, if they stop there. If they have *any rights* to the Universities at all, they have *all* the rights. If they had manfully demanded the whole, they should have had any support that I could have given them. I contend; and I will very shortly most elaborately prove that they have as clear a right to *every thing* belonging to the Universities, as the clergy and the people of the established church have. I will prove that they have also as great a right to the *edifice of the church, the churchyards, the parsonage houses, and the glebes*, as well as to the *tithes*. I will prove, that the church-clergy and the people have no *exclusive prescriptive right* to any one of these; and that, as the church was established by act

of Parliament, so it may be unestablished by act of Parliament; and I am prepared to prove, that it ought to be so unestablished; and that there ought to be, what the Dissenters call, "A separation of church from state." This is what every sincere and sensible Dissenter wants; and, therefore, in this respect, your manifesto will be lamentably short of giving satisfaction to the Dissenters.

PARAGRAPH 20 (reserving 19 for by-and-by). This relates to the church in Ireland, and expresses your determination to abide by the principle, upon which Lord STANLEY and Sir JAMES GRAHAM quitted the Ministry. That principle was, that nothing should be taken away from the church; that church-property was *unalienable*; and that, therefore, though it might not be wanted in Ireland, it should not be taken for any other than *ecclesiastical purposes*. As to the principle, it is not to be maintained for a moment; or, if it be, one-third part of the real property of England and Wales, and, indeed, of the whole kingdom, is held by usurpation, by wrongful force, or by fraud; and this you ought to know as well as I do. A very considerable part of the estates of the nobility and gentry consists of *lands, houses, tithes*, great and small, *Easter-offerings*, even! Let the fact be looked at seriously, sir. A very considerable part, I repeat it, of the estates of the nobility and gentry of the whole kingdom consists, at this very moment, of these things, ALL OF WHICH WERE CHURCH-PROPERTY BY PRESCRIPTIVE RIGHT, and all of which were taken away, and made *lay-property*, by acts of Parliament; and the holders of these parcels of property (yielding more than one-third of all the rental of the kingdom) rest upon no other title than that of grants from the crown, authorized by acts of Parliament, which alienated the property from the church, and gave it to the King, for him to distribute amongst laypersons. You ought to know all this; and yet one can hardly believe that you can know it, and still talk of

refusing to alienate the church-property in Ireland, where the want of that alienation is producing everlasting strife and bloodshed!

PARAGRAPHS 21 and 22. Now comes the church in England. You are "for" a COMMUTATION, as you have been "before"; and, you are for removing every abuse that can impair the efficiency of the establishment! Now, sir, what is *commutation*? A changing of one thing, or shape, or manner, for another. That is not what the people call for. They call for an *abolition* of the tithes, and of the tithe system altogether; and they are right, for two reasons: first, because the commutation, by changing a demand on the *produce*, and according to the amount of the produce; by changing this demand into a *rent-charge* upon the land, would, in fact, be absolutely *taking away* a part of every man's estate; and it might take away the whole of the estates, by another change or two *à la Peel*, in the value of money. This mad scheme never can be put in execution, without a total abrogation of all the laws of real property hitherto in existence in England. It would, for instance, be a great comfort to the Dissenters to find, that they had got rid of tithes, and caught a *rent-charge*! Oh, no! This is really crack-skull work. But, you will remove every abuse in the carrying on of the affairs of the church. If you do that, you must put an end to church itself; as you will very soon discover, when you come to see that about three hundred churches in England and Wales have been suffered to tumble down; when you come to see that about one half of the parsonage houses have tumbled down, or are unfit to live in, though the law commands so strictly that they shall be upheld; when you come to learn that the churches are deserted by both parson and people; because the aristocratical clergy come and take the revenues away from the working clergy. I could point to you a parish which is in this state. It is a *sectory*, observe; the tithes seven hundred and fifty pounds a year; the rector has FIFTEEN POUNDS of this

revenue, the rest being taken away by a *dignified clergyman, who is a LORD!* The poor rector, however, gets fifty pounds more a year; and who gives him that? Why, he has it out of the *taxes*, voted by a boroughmonger Parliament! When you come to see innumerable instances of this sort, will you then say, that you will "*remove every abuse that can impair the efficiency of the church*"? You may say so, and you may attempt to remove this enormous abuse, when you find between three and four thousand miserable incumbents, who have, on an average, not more a year than the wages of a journeyman carpenter in London, while there are bishops who have *thirty thousand* a year each. You may endeavour to remove this shameful, this crying abuse, which you cannot, without the most shameless inconsistency, let remain, while you are crying up the *unalienable* nature of church-property. You MAY attempt to remove this abuse; but, if you do, the very moment you begin to make the attempt, you will be called *jacobin* and *leveller*: you will be accused of a wish to "*overthrow the institutions of the country*"; and you must come and join US at last; or be left a *solitaire* amidst a boundless wilderness of riches.

PARAGRAPH 19. (which I stepped over before). This is a matter of PENSIONS; and you tell us that you will do just what the Whigs did with regard to them; that is to say, *not lop any of them off*; and Lord ALTHORP told us, that they were *charitable grants*; that it would be cruel to withdraw them; and that it showed a want of *gentlemanlike feeling* in Mr. HARVEY, to entertain a desire that the House of Commons should even make an *inquiry* into the grounds upon which they had been granted! And yet, when the Poor-law Bill was passing, and when the Poor-law part of it was under consideration; when several members most emphatically expressed their abhorrence of the cruelty of such a law, Lord ALTHORP, who had just then come back from communing with SENIOR, COULSTON, and penny-a-line CHADWICK, who

were stuck up in a corner of the House, told us, that *it did not become legislators to act upon their feelings*; but to be influenced by what dry reason told them was *just*, and for the *general good*. You, sir, voted for this bill, and the Duke of WELLINGTON voted and spoke for it. And, is this nation going to stand by, and see this Poor-law Bill enforced; and, at the same time, see the poor taxed to the amount of one-half of their earnings, and see these pensioners supported, in great part, out of those earnings! Are the English people going to be so base, at last, as to hear declared in the House of Lords, and amidst cheers, that there ought to be no *law to provide relief for even the aged and infirm*; and to see the working people, compelled at the same time, to support these lord and lady pensioners, and their children and dependents? Are the people of England going to be sunk down into this pit of baseness? No; *they are not!* The pension-list was odious enough before; but what is it now with this Poor-law Bill and its principles and provisions, before our eyes. Sir, by the time that this letter will appear in print, there will also appear, from under my pen, a little book, bound in leather, price sixteen pence, that any journeyman or labourer may carry in his waistcoat pocket, under the following title: "*CORBETT'S LEGACY TO LABOURERS; OR, what is the right which the Lords, Baronets, and Squires, have to parcels of land in England, more than any other men have to the same parcels of land? With a dedication to SIR ROBERT PEEL.*" I shall direct my publisher to send you one of these little books, which you will be pleased to look upon as a thing *forced from me*, by that Poor-law Bill, which you and the Duke of WELLINGTON supported, and which is a greater departure from *ancient rights*, and implies a more contemptuous and audacious disregard for *prescriptive authority*, than even any part of that criminal code, being the author of which, you now make your own boast. This bill has challenged an inquiry into all the rights of property: it has set inquiry on foot; and before that inquiry

be over, important, indeed, will be the consequences. Nothing can stay these consequences, but *staying the bill itself*; and, on that matter, you deign not to use a word, even in the way of allusion. Indeed, from what I see at the *Tory meetings*, from the *altered tone* of the *Tory newspapers*, upon this point, your silence as to it, and some other things, make me believe, that you mean to *push on* this law. But you ought to have *told us so* then. In the absence of any thing said by you, I, for my part, shall take the affirmative for granted, and, as far as my efforts can go, shall act towards the aristocracy accordingly.

PARAGRAPHS 23, 24, and 25. The two last require no comment; but the 23. demands particular attention. It promises us "the support of PUBLIC CREDIT, and the enforcement of strict economy, and the impartial consideration of what is due to AGRICULTURE, MANUFACTURES, and COMMERCE"! I remember hearing PITT rounding his banging periods just in this manner, when he used to be moving for LOANS to carry on the war against France. PITT was a great captain in this way. He used to cut down the talkers about LAVISH EXPENDITURE and the dangers of the DEBT, as a cat claps her claws upon a nest of mice. He used to swing his arm round, giving a twist of his body at the same time; and unhappy was the wretch on whom his disapproving eye happened to alight! Now, sir, you, as far as I am a judge of such matters, have a desire to approach somewhat towards PITT, as a parliamentary JUPITER; and I do not know that there is any very great deal of difference between *his audiences* and yours. He, too, was prime Minister, First Lord of the Treasury, and Chancellor of the Exchequer. You are all this, and he was no more; and where he had a penny in his pocket you have got ten pounds in yours. Ah, sir, how he used to thunder out, "England's agricultural, commercial, and manufacturing greatness"! How he raised himself up, swung about his arms and his head, when he said, "The only ambition that I covet is, that the House may, in its

great generosity, when this great measure (the SINKING FUND!) shall have accomplished its mighty purpose, cause MY NAME to be inscribed on a monument, erected to PUBLIC CREDIT"! But, alas, sir! PITT was putting out paper-money; you are drawing it in: PITT had wheat at fifteen shillings a bushel; you have it at five: PITT was taken out of the concern when the shallow-pated fools' "SINKING FUND" had seen the debt swell up to only about four hundred millions, with wheat at fifteen shillings a bushel; you have got a debt of eight hundred millions, and wheat at five shillings a bushel. PITT was in the midst of a glorious and head-bewildering war, and had prospects of endless happiness to hold forth to us, to come with a peace: you are at the end of twenty years of profound peace, and have no prospects of happiness to offer us, except there be any to be expected to arise out of another war! *Here is your real difficulty.* Here is that monster, which, if you be not prepared to encounter, and resolved to overcome, will, and in no long time, overcome you. There is no middle course, now; you must either subdue, or be subdued; and, however (after what has passed) you may doubt my sincerity, I do assure you, that the latter is the wish of

Your most humble
And most obedient servant,
WM. COBBETT.

TO THE ELECTORS

OF THE

BOROUGH OF TAMWORTH.

Gentlemen,—On the 26. of November last, being then at Rome, I received from his Majesty a summons, wholly unforeseen and unexpected by me, to return to England without delay, for the purpose of assisting his Majesty in the formation of a new Government. I instantly obeyed the command for my return, and on my arrival I did not hesitate, after an anxious review of the position of public affairs, to place at the

disposal of my sovereign any services which I might be thought capable of rendering.

My acceptance of the first office in the Government terminates for the present my political connexion with you. In seeking the renewal of it whenever you shall be called upon to perform the duty of electing a representative in Parliament, I feel it incumbent upon me to enter into a declaration of my views of public policy, as full and unreserved as I can make it, consistently with my duty as a Minister of the crown.

You are entitled to this from the nature of the trust which I again solicit, from the long habits of friendly intercourse in which we have lived, and from your tried adherence to me in times of difficulty, when the demonstration of unabated confidence was of peculiar value.

I gladly avail myself also of this, a legitimate opportunity, of making a more public appeal, of addressing, through you, to that great and intelligent class of society of which you are a portion, and a fair and unexceptionable representative, to that class which is much less interested in the contentions of party than in the maintenance of order and the cause of good government, that frank exposition of general principles and views which appear to be anxiously expected, and which it ought not to be the inclination, and cannot be the interest, of a Minister of this country to withhold.

Gentlemen, the arduous duties in which I am engaged have been imposed upon me through no act of mine. Whether they were an object of ambition coveted by me; whether I regard the power and distinction they confer as any sufficient compensation for the heavy sacrifice they involve, are matters of mere personal concern, on which I will not waste a word. The King, in a crisis of great difficulty, required my services. The question I had to decide was this, shall I obey the call, or shall I shrink from the responsibility, alleging as the reason, that I consider myself, in consequence of the Reform Bill, as labouring under a sort of moral disquali-

fication, which must preclude me; and all who think with me, both now and for ever, from entering into the official service of the crown. Would it, I ask, be becoming in any public man to act upon such a principle? Was it fit that I should assume that either the object or the effect of the Reform Bill has been to preclude all hope of a successful appeal to the good sense and calm judgment of the people, and so to fetter the prerogative of the crown, that the King has no free choice among his subjects, but must select his Ministers from one section, and one section only, of public men?

I have taken another course, but I have not taken it without deep and anxious consideration as to the probability that my opinions are so far in unison with those of the constituent body of the United Kingdom as to enable me, and those with whom I am about to act, and whose sentiments are in entire concurrence with my own, to establish such a claim upon public confidence as shall enable us to conduct with vigour and success the Government of this country.

I have the firmest conviction that that confidence cannot be secured by any other course than that of a frank and explicit declaration of principles, that vague and unmeaning professions of popular opinions may quiet distrust for a time, may influence this or that election; but that such professions must ultimately and signally fail, if, being made, they are not adhered to, or if they are inconsistent with the honour and character of those who make them.

Now, I say at once that I will not accept power on the condition of declaring myself an apostate from the principles on which I have heretofore acted; at the same time, I never will admit that I have been [either before or after the Reform Bill, the defender of abuses, or the enemy of judicious reforms. I appeal with confidence in denial of the charge to the active part I took in the great question of the currency, in the consolidations and amendment of the criminal law, in the revisal of the whole system of trial by jury, to the opinions

I have professed and uniformly acted on with regard to other branches of the jurisprudence of the country; I appeal to this as a proof that I have not been disposed to acquiesce in acknowledged evils, either from the mere superstitious reverence for ancient usages, or from the dread of labour or responsibility in the application of a remedy.

But the Reform Bill, it is said constitutes a new era, and it is the duty of a Minister to declare explicitly, first, whether he will maintain the bill itself; and, secondly, whether he will act upon the spirit in which it was conceived.

With respect to the Reform Bill itself, I will repeat now the declaration which I made when I entered the House of Commons as a member of the reformed Parliament, that I consider the Reform Bill a final and irrevocable settlement of a great constitutional question; a settlement which no friend to the peace and welfare of this country would attempt to disturb either by direct or by insidious means.

Then, as to the spirit of the Reform Bill, and the willingness to adopt and enforce it as a rule of Government; if by adopting the spirit of the Reform Bill, it be meant that we are to live in a perpetual vortex of agitation; that public men can only support themselves in public estimation by adopting every popular impression of the day, by promising the instant redress of anything which anybody may call an abuse, by abandoning altogether that great aid of Government, more powerful than either law or reason, the respect for ancient right, and the deference to prescriptive authority; if this be the spirit of the Reform Bill, I will not undertake to adopt it; but if the spirit of the Reform Bill implies merely a careful review of institutions civil and ecclesiastical, undertaken in a friendly temper, combining with the firm maintenance of established rights the correction of proved abuses, and the redress of real grievances, in that case, I can for myself and colleagues undertake to act in such a spirit and with such intention.

Such declarations of general principles are, I am aware, necessarily vague; but

in order to be more explicit, I will endeavour to apply them practically to some of those questions which have, of late, attracted the greatest share of public interest and attention.

I take, first, the inquiry into municipal corporations.

It is not my intention to advise the crown to interrupt the progress of that inquiry, nor to transfer the conduct of it from those to whom it was committed by the late Government. For myself, I gave the best proof that I was not unfriendly to the principle of inquiry, by consenting to be a member of that committee of the House of Commons on which it was originally devolved. No report has yet been made by the commissioners to whom the inquiry was afterwards referred, and until that report be made, I cannot be expected to give on the part of the Government any other pledge than that they will bestow on the suggestions it may contain, and the evidence on which they may be founded, a full and unprejudiced consideration.

I will, in the next place, address myself to the questions in which those of our fellow-countrymen, who dissent from the doctrines of the established church, take an especial interest.

Instead of making new professions, I will refer to the course which I took upon those subjects when out of power.

In the first place, I supported the measure brought forward by Lord Althorp, the object of which was to exempt all classes from the payment of church rates, applying in lieu thereof, out of a branch of the revenue, a certain sum for the building and repair of the churches. I never expressed, nor did I entertain, the slightest objection to the principles of a bill of which Lord John Russell was the author, intended to relieve the conscientious scruples of Dissenters in respect of the ceremony of marriage. I give no opinion now on the particular measures themselves; they were proposed by Ministers in whom the Dissenters had confidence; they were intended to give relief, and it is sufficient for my present purpose to state that I supported the principle of them.

I opposed, and I am bound to state

that my opinions in that respect have undergone no change, the admission of Dissenters, as a claim of right, into the Universities: but I expressly declared that, if regulations enforced by public authorities superintending the professions of law and medicine, and the studies connected with them, had the effect of conferring advantages of the nature of civil privileges on one class of the King's subjects from which another class was excluded, those regulations ought to undergo modification, with the view of placing all the King's subjects, whatever their religious creeds, upon a footing of perfect equality with respect to any civil privilege.

I appeal to the course which I pursued on those several questions, when office must have been out of contemplation; and I ask with confidence, does that course imply that I was actuated by any illiberal or intolerant spirit towards the dissenting body, or by an unwillingness to consider fairly the redress of any real grievances?

In the examination of other questions which excited public feeling, I will not omit the pension list. I resisted, and with the opinions I entertain I should again resist, a retrospective inquiry into pensions granted by the crown at a time when the discretion of the crown was neither fettered by law, nor by the expression of any opinion on the part of the House of Commons. But I voted for the resolution moved by Lord Althorp, that pensions on the civil list ought for the future to be confined to such persons only as have just claims to the royal beneficence, or are entitled to consideration on account either of their personal services to the crown or of the performance of duties to the public, or of their scientific or literary eminence. On the resolution which I thus supported as a private member of Parliament, I shall scrupulously act as a Minister of the crown, and shall advise the grant of no pension which is not in conformity with the spirit and intention of the vote to which I was a party.

Then, as to the great question of church reform, on that head I have no new professions to make. I cannot give

my consent to the alienation of church property in any part of the United Kingdom from strictly ecclesiastical purposes. But I repeat now the opinions that I have already expressed in Parliament in regard to the church establishment in Ireland, that if, by an improved distribution of the revenues of the church, its just influence can be extended, and the true interests of the established religion promoted, all other considerations should be made subordinate to the advancement of objects of such paramount importance.

As to church property in this country, no person has expressed a more earnest wish than I have done that the question of tithe, complicated and difficult as I acknowledge it to be, should, if possible, be satisfactorily settled, by the means of a commutation, founded upon just principles, and proposed after mature consideration.

With regard to alterations in the laws which govern our ecclesiastical establishment, I have had no recent opportunity of giving that grave consideration to a subject of the deepest interest which could alone justify me in making any public declaration of opinion. It is a subject which must undergo the fullest deliberation, and into that deliberation the Government will enter with the sincerest desire to remove every abuse that can impair the efficiency of the establishment, to extend the sphere of its usefulness, and to strengthen and confirm its just claims upon the respect and affections of the people.

It is unnecessary for my purpose to enter into further details. I have said enough with respect to general principles, and their practical application to public measures, to indicate the spirit in which the King's Government is prepared to act. Our object will be, the maintenance of peace; the scrupulous and honourable fulfilment, without reference to their original policy, of all existing engagements with foreign powers; the support of public credit; the enforcement of strict economy; and the just and impartial consideration of what is due to all interests; agricultural, manufacturing, and commercial.

Whatever may be the issue of the undertaking in which I am engaged, I feel assured that you will mark, by a renewal of your confidence, your approbation of the course I have pursued in accepting office. I enter upon the arduous duties assigned to me with the deepest sense of the responsibility they involve, with great distrust of my own qualifications for their adequate discharge, but at the same time with a resolution to persevere which nothing could inspire but the strong impulse of public duty, the consciousness of upright motives, and the firm belief that the people of this country will so far maintain the prerogative of the King as to give to the Ministers of his choice, not an implicit confidence, but a fair trial.

I am, Gentlemen,
With affectionate regard,
Most faithfully yours,
(Signed) ROBERT PEEL.

MR. HARVEY.

I SEE that Mr. HARVEY has published an address to the electors of COLCHESTER, notifying his intention not to go to the poll there, after having been a representative of that borough in three or four successive Parliaments; and he pretty plainly says, that he cannot stand a contest against the weight of the purses of SAUNDERSON and SMYTH, whose purses are of the wagon-load sort. This is most scandalous to the borough of COLCHESTER, and marks it out for the scorn and hatred of all the rest of the kingdom. It is very evident, that Mr. HARVEY is to be thus *punished* for his memorable motion for an inquiry into the PENSION LIST in particular, and for his good conduct invariably in the House of Commons; and his fearless support of the rights of the people, in addition to which there were few men in the House with any thing like so much talent as Mr. HARVEY.

I do hope that there is *some borough* with public spirit enough to invite, and to elect, Mr. HARVEY. If the people

suffer men to be cut down thus, who stand forward boldly for them, while scores, and even hundreds, hang back; then, indeed, they will show that the REFORM has been of no use; and that they merit being fleeced to the last rag upon their backs. There are two score of places that might, if they would, choose Mr. HARVEY. If none of them do it, it will be a disgrace to the whole country; and Mr. HARVEY's example, his *punishment*, will be a *warning* to others to skulk from their duty, if they have a mind to keep their seats.

LEGACY TO LABOURERS

Will be published on the 31. instant.

COBBETT'S

LEGACY TO LABOURERS;

OR,

What is the Right which the Lords, Baronets, and 'Squires, have to possess the Lands, or to make the Laws?

In Six Letters addressed to the Working People of the whole Kingdom.

WITH A DEDICATION TO

SIR ROBERT PEEL.

BY WILLIAM COBBETT, M.P. FOR OLDHAM.

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Dedication to Sir ROBERT PEEL; stating the reasons for writing the book, and also the reasons for dedicating it to him.

Letter I. How came some men to have a greater right to parcels of land than any other men have to the same land?

Letter II. What right have English landlords to the lands? How came they in possession of them? Of what nature is their title?

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Can they *use* them in any way that shall clearly tend to the injury of other men, or to that of the King, or Commonwealth?

Can they use them so as to drive the natives from them?

Can they use them so as to cause the natives to perish of hunger, or of cold?

Letter VI. What right have the Lords, Baronets, Squires, and rich men, to vote at elections any more than working men have?

Price, bound in leather, SIXTEEN-PENCE.

GARDEN AND FIELD SEEDS.

THE bags of seeds, of which I spoke some time ago, require in the putting of them up, and absolutely demand, my presence in London: and present there I cannot be, until the dissolution of Parliament has taken place. But this is of no consequence to those who want seeds, because not one single hour is gained by the sowing of any seeds earlier than the first week in February; especially this year, when we are sure to have the frosts after that time; or at least, frosts to cut off peas, or any thing else out of the ground before that time. However, I must put up with any inconvenience as to this matter, which may arise from my absence. My presence is absolutely necessary to secure genuineness and soundness in the seeds put up; and I prefer loss of sale to any deficiency or imperfection, as to either of these points.

THE following letter was written before I saw the address of Sir ROBERT PEEL to his constituents. The reader will see that I anticipated all that was coming. I had no opportunity of sending it off soon enough for insertion in the *Standard*.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE STANDARD.

Wolseley Hall, 19. Dec. 1834.

SIR,—From an article which appeared in your paper of the 17. instant, it would seem that you are a good deal frightened. You do, indeed, set out in an easy and rather bo'd tone: you give us a list of the new Ministry, making a rather formidable array. But you,

immediately afterwards, fly off into speculations as to the horrors which will take place, if the Whigs should get back again into power! As if, with MACBETH, you were saying to yourself, "Take any shape but that!"

Very hideous, I must confess, sir; but may I be so bold as to ask, what it is that can have brought the frightful image into your mind? What it is that can have made you think such a thing possible? Then come some very grave observations as to the consequences of so untoward an event. You give us a long list of revolutionary movements, ending with the overthrow of the church, the nobility, and even of the throne. You frighten me half to death: but, upon recovering my breath again, I ask myself, what it is that can have given you reason to fear the possibility of the arrival of such dreadful evils? And then, immediately, that brings me back again to the question: What is it that can have made you suppose it possible that the Whigs can return to power? Having hardly had time to put this question to myself, and pushed forward by my anxiety to know the worse that is to befall us, I find the picture of horrors wound up by a description of the dangers to property, and especially the dangers to property in the funds!

"So, so," said I to myself, "is that all?" A little comforted now, and somewhat recovered from my fright: having got my reasoning faculties back again, I begin to reason: and the first question I ask myself is, what can be the cause of this great change in tone and sentiment? Why, this *Standard* newspaper, which, in a strain most lively and cutting was, but the other day, treating the Whigs with scorn and contempt, is here all at once grown serious, and talking of them as a powerful and dangerous body. This paper, which but last week was ridiculing the Whigs upon the melancholy and eternal leave that they were taking of their offices, is now trembling with fear, lest they should be back in those offices again. This paper, which, in strains so eloquent and so true, used to describe

these usurious bands of money-mongers, who are swallowing up the fruits of the ancient inheritances and of the labour of the people, has now got an ague fit that makes its teeth chatter in its head, at the bare thought of seeing "*funded property*" in danger; this paper, which has published volumes in condemnation of the bill of 1819, is now half dead at the thought of seeing something like justice done to those who have been plundered and ruined by that destructive bill! What can be the cause of all this?

Now, sir, let us speak plainly. The cause, I take to be this: you see Sir ROBERT PEEL Prime Minister, First Lord of the Treasury, and Chancellor of the Exchequer. You see, that, if he *flinch*, back come the Whigs again; or, at least, so you conclude. You have learnt, or, at least, so I believe, that he will make no change in the value of the currency; no reduction of the interest of the debt; that he will not repeal the malt-tax: and, I believe you to have a thorough conviction, in your mind, that, this being the case, he must quit his place in a very short time, in which opinion I most cordially join with you. You see, apparently more than I do; for you appear to see that the Duke could not go on without him; and I see no such a thing; and I repeat what I said in my *Register* of the 29. of November, that, in many respects, the Duke would do better without him than with him, because the Duke is not pledged up to the eyes, about malt-tax, and about currency. Of one thing, however, I am very sure; that is this, that neither the Duke, Sir ROBERT PEEL, nor any man alive, can keep his place as Minister for any length of time, if he persevere in upholding the present currency and the present taxes; and that, so persevering, Sir ROBERT PEEL can neither meet the present Parliament, nor resort to the votes of a new one.

Sir, you are an able writer, and by no means a blind politician. Look back at the changes that have taken place within the last five or six years; look back at the Duke's expulsion from

office, in 1830: look well at the matter, and you will find, that the great troubles of the Government; the great cause of its yielding to change after change; the great cause of its listening patiently to things, to speak of which to it would have been criminal twenty years ago: look at these things well, and you will find that IT IS THE DEBT which has always been at the bottom of every measure of change, whether for good or for evil; and you will find that it is the debt which is the cause of those appearances which now fill you with so much terror; and which debt will produce all the greater evils which you apprehend, unless there be found a Minister, honest and bold enough to encounter it face to face, and a Parliament, honest and bold enough to support them.

If you have the indulgence to insert this letter in your paper of Saturday evening, you will very much oblige me. If you think it improper to do it, I, with thanks to you, for many able and fine papers that I have read, coming from your pen, shall still remain

Your most obedient
And most humble servant,
WM. COBBETT.

MALT-TAX.

THE following article from the *Standard* shows very clearly that the new Ministers do not intend to repeal the malt-tax, which the *Standard* tells us has become a sort of *prescriptive* tax. I am sorry to see this able and elegant writer stoop so low as to employ his talents in this way. Ah, Mr. *Standard*! A man who has nothing to live on but his pen, must resolve to live upon bread and cheese; or, at least, to be able to live upon bread and cheese and small beer; or to give up all hopes of obtaining honest fame. Poor WILLIAM GIFFORD was a melancholy instance of this. He was a cobbler's son of ASHBURTON in Devonshire. From the bottom of his heart he despised CANNING, FRERE, LIVERPOOL, and the whole crew; he held a pen at the hostility of which they

would have trembled; but he sighed for a carriage and pair; for a laced footman, and two or three dishes for dinner; he died, leaving twenty or thirty thousand pounds behind him, which nobody thanked him for. He expired the hack of CANNING, who refused to follow his corpse to the grave; there he is rotten as a clod, and no more remembered than any clod of earth in England. Ah! Mr. Standard! You may find out a *prescriptive* right in the Government to keep on the malt-tax; and I dare say you will find out its prescriptive right to make the nation pay the fundholder two bushels of wheat, instead of one, and to make the children now in the cradle pay the interest of debts, contracted before their fathers were born: hard pushed, I dare say you will find out a prescriptive right for every thing and for any thing, that your patrons may choose to do; but, Mr. Standard, I will send you a **LITTLE BOOK** in a few days, which will show you what the whole of the people of this nation will soon know with regard to prescriptive rights. When you have read that little book, pray, remember, that that is the effect of a life, which has proceeded from bread and cheese and small beer, and a disregard of the carriage and pair, the laced footman, and the three dishes. I deeply lament this dereliction of duty on your part; but I must not neglect to perform my own; and I do beg you, who possess so much, and such excellent talent, to think seriously of poor **WILLIAM GIFFORD**, his carriage and pair, his double sinecure for life, his hack salary, his twenty or thirty thousand pounds left behind him, his present character of clod, moulded perhaps, one of these days, into a moist lump, "to stop a hole to keep the wind away." Oh, God! think of that, Mr. Standard; and if you do, you will not again talk about "*prescriptive taxes*," especially when they are only thirty-nine years old. Really, my respect for your talents has induced me to write this; and I will just here add, that it is a shame, that the commendations which you have bestowed on Sir **ROBERT PEELE**'s letter, should have come from a man like you,

who could, upon the same subject, have written a ten thousand times better letter.

In our subsequent columns will be found a report of the meeting of the Buckinghamshire Agricultural Association, yesterday, at Aylesbury. The Duke of Buckingham presided, and about 800 persons, principally farmers, assembled to dinner. The ennobled chairman gave the toasts with great dignity and effect. "The King, the Queen, Royal Family," were greeted with enthusiastic applause. Nothing could be more flattering than the short speech in which the health of the Duke of Wellington was announced, or the reception of the toast by the assembled company. Upon the noble president's health being proposed, his Grace returned thanks in a very happy speech, one passage of which deserves particular notice, both from its cordial expression of feeling, and the unexampled and undesigned effect which it produced. "Can any man," said his Grace, "feel prouder than I do, surrounded as I am by such a numerous and respectable assembly. I received your confidence at an early age; that confidence was transmitted to me by those who loved me and went before me; and I have transmitted your confidence there" (pointing to Lord Chandos). Words cannot describe the rapidity with which the allusion was caught up, or the tumultuous energy of applause with which it was acknowledged. Well, indeed, might the noble Duke feel proud in having the opportunity to be surrounded with such friends, and to present them with such a son. Few like occasions of happiness can occur in human life; and fortunate is he to whom Heaven affords one of them. When the health of Lord Chandos was proposed, with what greeting received we need not say, his lordship addressed the meeting. The character of the assembly, as well as its original purpose, required that his lordship should address himself more particularly to the hope which the agricultural population naturally enough rest upon the late happy change in the King's

Government. The noble Marquis spoke with his characteristic frank eloquence of the necessity of a repeal of the malt-tax in the whole, or in part. That the malt-tax is in all attributes of a bad tax, the worst of all our taxes; that it is the most unprofitable to the Exchequer in proportion to its burden upon the people; that its tendency is demoralizing, beyond the tendency of any other tax; that at present it burdens the most oppressed and suffering class of the community we have again and again argued. If its continuance deprive the public service of the Marquis of Chandos in the character of a Minister, we shall consider the fact no light aggravation of the mischievous character of that tax. We believe there is no second opinion, indeed we are sure that there is none amongst public men of whom we know any thing, that a repeal or reduction of the malt-tax ought to be the very first object with a finance Minister of Great Britain. There is unfortunately, however, a wide interval between what can be done, and what ought to be done. We can see that the malt-tax ought to have been repealed many years ago; and, as many millions of taxes have been repealed, it may seem, at first sight, strange that such a tax is permitted to continue. Beside, however, the proverbial weakness of the agriculturalists as a political body, urging claims, the magnitude of this evil has, as has often happened, supplied its protection. The vice of the malt-tax lies, at least, as much in its species as in its degree. Were the tax itself reduced from two shillings and sevenpence the bushel, so long as a single penny should be left to subject the manufacture of malt to fiscal superintendence, the farmer would receive no relief, the people would gain no protection, from the vexatious and demoralizing operation of the duty. But a finance Minister has rarely such a sum as four and a half millions, the amount of the malt-tax, to surrender in a single session; and if he has, he will find a host of claimants nearer to him, and more clamorous than the farmer. A tax, too, which has been levied to greater

or less amount for nearly two centuries, has some prescription to plead. The question, however, now is not, *ought* the tax to be got rid of, but, *can* it be got rid of? We confess that we do not see how the whole can be repealed in any one session; and if the farmers will not content themselves with taking a repeal by instalments, as the opportunity may arise, we have little hope that the whole tax will ever be repealed: because we do not anticipate that any Minister will ever have a surplus fund of four and a half millions to dispose of, and the time for laying on new taxes has gone by.

The malt-tax constitutes more than a third of the now available revenue of the country. To expect, therefore, that the whole of that tax can be provided for by any practicable reduction of expenditure in any one year, must be very silly. If that the farmers ought to expect, and what, we think, they and the public with them (for as all consume beer the public are really as much concerned as the farmers), have a right to expect, is a beginning, or even a proof of a disposition to begin with the reduction of this tax. A tax is not a principle, a truth of which the *Globe* and *Morning Chronicle* seem to have lost sight when they lecture upon the inconsistency of men who have voted variously upon this same subject, sitting in the same cabinet. A tax is not a principle, and it is, therefore, a matter perfectly open for compromise. This appears to have occurred to the Marquis of Chandos, for he admitted the possibility of a gradual reduction. We are sorry to observe that one of the persons present objected to any thing less than a total repeal. To raise such peremptory objections is, however, the worst possible policy for the agricultural interest. It is as much as if one should say, "What I cannot have at the instant, I will not have at all"; and if this feeling were universal amongst the agriculturalists, we certainly should despair of their cause; even now how much would they injure themselves by rendering it impossible for the Marquis of Chandos to take that place in the

Government to which the King, the King's Ministers, and the country invite him! How much more will they injure themselves, if they destroy as, doubtless, destroy they may, the only Government from which they can have any just ground of hope? If ever there was a case for compromise this is the case; let the farmers say fairly, "We generously trust those who have generously served us, we will not proscrib[e] them from those honours and distinctions, to which they have a fair claim, by imposing conditions, impossible to be exacted on the acceptance of those honours and distinctions; we will generously confide in our proved friends to do what they can in our service; but we will not disable them by requiring them to do that which they cannot." Let the farmers take this course, and we think we can confidently promise them relief from the whole of the malt-tax in a year or two; perhaps relief from a part in the present year. Let them take another course, and we, no less confidently, predict that they never will be relieved from a farthing of it.

I INSERT the following from a London paper, in order to show what base vagabonds the Kentish bull-frogs are. They did not recollect a person of the name of WILLIAM COBBETT! It is curious to observe the nasty, gross hypocrisy of these fellows. They will not, however, deceive the "*labourer*," whom they so love! That labourer wants the duty taken off *hops* as well as off malt, and that these fellows do not want. Very curious this. If the malt-tax were taken off to-morrow, the *hop-monopoly* would make the hops then cost a third part as much as the malt would cost. I am a native of the famous hop-growing place, FARNHAM; but these fellows shall find that the hop-monopolists will not keep their monopoly, if the malt-tax be repealed. Talk of the *Corn Bill*, indeed! Look at the *Hop Bill*! These fellows would have done well to

have behaved decently, or else have held their tongues. The praises which they have bestowed upon Sir WILLIAM INGLIBY, that gentleman will despise, when he perceives that there are no thanks given to the members of Parliament who supported my motion in the last session. I insert their proceedings, as a specimen of bull-frog stupidity and hypocrisy.

REPEAL OF THE MALT-TAX.

A meeting of gentlemen took place yesterday at Brown's Hotel, Bridge-street, Westminster, to take into consideration the best means of obtaining relief from the destructive consequences of that most cruel and unjust tax, the duty on malt. The meeting was but thinly attended, which was attributed by the gentlemen at whose instance the meeting was convened to the circumstance of many gentlemen interested in the object of the meeting being engaged in canvassing.

Mr. ELLIS, an extensive farmer of Kent, was called to the chair.

The CHAIRMAN said, that it required but little argument from him to show, that to advocate a repeal of the malt-tax was to uphold the cause of the poor, and that cause was, in his opinion, the duty of the rich; and he regretted that there were not more of those who came under the latter designation at the meeting. However, they would do the best they could in the absence of more influential persons, to advocate the cause of the poor agricultural labourer. (Hear, hear). It appeared to him to be quite clear that every man, woman, and child, who assisted in the cultivation of the land, was entitled to partake of the advantages of its produce. (Hear). It was equally clear that the cultivator of the soil was prevented from this positive right, owing to the operation of the malt-tax. (Hear). He could not himself state all the evil consequences of this most iniquitous tax; but having been, from circumstances, all his life amongst the labouring classes of the country, he knew that to them at least that tax worked great injustice. (Hear). Frequently had he seen the agricultural

labourer in the oppressive part of the day obliged to drink water to quench his thirst, not being able to get good beer; but owing to the present state of agriculture, the farmers were not able to provide their labourers with this necessary and wholesome beverage. (Hear, hear). It cost him (Mr. Ellis) 2,000*l.* for beer in three years. He could not now afford to give his men as much beer as he was in the habit of allowing them; but not only himself, but his brother farmers, would be happy to have an opportunity of contributing to the comforts of the poor in this respect if the malt duty were repealed. (Hear). He would be happy, if such a result took place, to sow fifteen, or twenty, or thirty acres of barley for the manufacture of malt, for the advantage of his labourers; but to cultivate barley now was only to give pain to the labourer, who perceived that, instead of reaping advantage from the circumstance himself, he was only contributing to the comforts of hogs and other animals in the farmer's yard. He remembered well when the labourers used to brew for themselves. One of his labourers used to brew from as small a quantity as a peck, which proved that if the malt duty were removed an opportunity would be afforded to the agricultural labourer to brew his own beer. (Hear). This very man informed him that in brewing this peck of barley he saved himself two gallons of flour. Such was the nutritious character of the barley when made into malt. (Hear). This one fact in itself showed the impolicy and injustice of the malt-tax. Notwithstanding the pressure upon the land the farmers would most willingly give up a portion of their land for the cultivation of barley; but if they did so under existing circumstances, they would have to pay a tax to four or five times the amount of the price of the barley given. (Hear, hear, hear). The worthy chairman then went into a calculation to show that since 1723, when the population was less than one-half of what it was at present, there was, comparatively speaking, a greater quantity of beer drunk. He then observed, that where spade

husbandry was introduced it was quite necessary, in order that the agricultural labourer should be able to contend in any way with teams of horses, that he should be enabled to obtain good wholesome beer. There were so many facts in connexion with this case that it was impossible to advert to them all. What he wished to impress upon the minds of the gentlemen present was, that pigs and hogs got that which, but for the malt-tax, would be made into good wholesome beverage for the labourer. For the last fourteen or fifteen years he and several gentlemen who had acted with him had made frequent endeavours to rid the country of an impost so oppressive as the malt-tax. They had frequent meetings on the subject at Maidstone; they began by asking for the repeal of part of the duty; they now asked for relief from the whole. Since then the duty had been taken off beer, and the consumption of barley was not now more than five millions of quarters, although in 1723, when the population was only five millions and a half, the consumption of barley was 3,800,000 quarters. It was said that the labourers got too much beer. (Hear). This he denied. (Hear). They might get too much of a Friday or Saturday night, when they got their week's earnings (hear); but if they had a fair quantity during the week they would not be so anxious to partake of so large a portion at the end of the week, when, instead of doing them good, it did injury. (Hear). The chairman, in adverting to the taxes which had already been reduced since the peace, said that the reduction of the property-tax produced no benefit to the labourer; nor did the reduction of the assessed taxes, the duty upon wine, &c., produce any benefit to the labourer. The tax upon spirits which had been taken off was rather an injury than a benefit to the labourer. Upon the whole then it was clear that something was yet due by the legislature to the agricultural labourer, and that the best course that could be adopted for the relief of the class of persons to whom he had alluded would be the taking off the duty upon malt. In the course of the

last year 120 petitions had been presented to the legislature on the subject from the county of Kent, which had been signed by 26,000 persons, and this year he had no doubt but that they would be greater. What he was anxious for was, that they should be prepared to meet the coming session, to be in such time with their claims, so that advantage could be taken of them by the Minister, should he be disposed to make any alterations in the financial affairs of the country (hear); and here he must say, that for one he would accept a reduction of one-half of the malt duty, if he could not get the whole. (Hear). He had the satisfaction to inform the meeting that the Marquis of Chandos had kindly consented to bring this question before the House of Commons next year, and he (the chairman) hoped that every friend of his country, and every friend to the poor, would do every thing in his power to get rid of a tax which was a disgrace to the country. (Hear).

Mr. RUSSELL, another respectable farmer, addressed the meeting in support of the view taken of the subject by the worthy chairman, and observed that, according to an account kept by an ancestor of his, it appeared that in 1699 barley was 30s. the quarter, while in the spring of this year it was only 25s., but at the period when his ancestor lived the same quantity of malt could be got back from the maltsters, and at the same price, as the barley that had been sent to him, a bushel of barley and a bushel of malt at that time being 3s. 9d. At the early part of this year, however, although barley was only 3s. 1½d. a bushel, the same quantity of malt could not be got from the maltster under 8s. This clearly proved the injurious tendency of the malt duty, and explained why it was that the farmers could not afford to give beer to their labourers. (Hear, hear).

Mr. WELLS quite agreed in the view taken of the subject by the gentleman who had preceded him, whose practical knowledge afforded him such excellent opportunities of ascertaining how far the tax in question was injurious to the

agricultural labourers. (Hear). He, however, could never agree to the tax being reduced one-half, for that would still leave in existence all the complex and expensive machinery of collection, &c. (hear, hear); and when gentlemen recollected that it cost this country upwards of 8,000,000*l.* for collecting the revenue, he was quite sure that they would be anxious to adopt every means by which that expense was to be lessened. (Hear, hear). Mr. Wells then adverted to the pressure of taxes upon the land, and said that he thought the only fair course for Parliament to adopt was to get a committee of the House of Commons to consider how the taxes generally pressed upon the resources of the country, and thus to adopt the best means to lighten the pressure. (Hear, hear, hear). He thought that the best course which the meeting could adopt would be to put itself, through the medium of its chairman, in communication with Sir E. Knatchbull, one of the present Ministers, who was known to be favourable to their views, and that he should be requested to lay before his colleagues the views that were entertained by the meeting in reference to the malt duty. (Hear, hear).

Resolutions to the following effect were then put from the chair, and unanimously agreed to.

“That a supply of wholesome beer is essentially necessary to the poor generally, particularly to the working labourer; and that it is the imperative duty of all to use their best exertions to enable them to obtain that sustenance, of which they are now deprived by the excessive duty on malt.

“That the average individual consumption of malt, having decreased to less than half the amount of what it was before the prohibitory duties were laid on, would rapidly increase, and thereby would greatly relieve the poor-rates, by the stimulus given to tillage, and tend to improve trade. That the prohibitory duty is contrary to equity, humanity, and sound policy, and has increased crime and demoralization. That whilst the meeting feel gratified for the reduction of taxation that has

taken place, they respectfully submit that the poorer classes have not had their equal share of reduction, the duty on malt being unaltered. That the meeting earnestly invites the co-operation of all classes in the promotion of measures for the repeal of the malt-tax. That although this meeting studiously avoids stating political feelings on the recent change of the Ministry, yet they cannot help expressing their anxious hopes that the present Ministers will not be hostile to the repeal of the malt-tax, the necessity of which, this meeting knows, has been admitted by several members of the present cabinet.

"That copies of the resolutions be presented to Sir Edward Knatchbull, Bart., with a request that he will submit the same to his colleagues in office.

"That the thanks of this meeting and of the country are due to those members of Parliament who supported Sir W. Ingilby's resolution last session, as well as to the public press, for advocating the repeal of the malt-tax.

"That upon a general election taking place it is strongly recommended by this meeting that all friends to the cause do have a most decisive answer from each candidate that they will support a repeal of the malt-tax.

"That this meeting recommend that petitions to Parliament be forthwith proposed and signed as numerous as possible throughout the kingdom.

"That this meeting be adjourned to the second Tuesday after the meeting of Parliament, to be held at this place."

After a few general observations, it was agreed that the meeting should stand adjourned until the second Tuesday after the meeting of Parliament, it having been previously agreed that Mr. Wells should act as honorary secretary.

Thanks having been given to the Chairman, the meeting separated.

POOR-LAW BILL.

READER, pray pay attention to this. I shall not say in this place, what I think about the matter; only just observe, I

shall, that this is a little foretaste of that which is to come. Every sensible reader will see the point to which this tends. I dare say the marquis, while he heard that these sixty able-bodied men were at his door, thought of the illustrious, "*homme de lettres et avocat*," who hatched this bill, and who said, that there ought to be no legal provision, even for the aged and infirm; and who said this about three quarters of an hour before the marquis supported the bill by his speech. I will send the marquis, some of whose tenants I saw in Ireland, a copy of my little book, the "*Legacy to Labourers*"; and I will take care that some of the labourers in the neighbourhood of CALNE shall have it, too. That book will not only teach them their own rights, but tell them *what rights the marquis himself has*.

(From the True Sun).

MISCONSTRUCTIONS OF THE NEW POOR-LAW BILL IN THE COUNTRY.

(From a Correspondent).

"On Tuesday the 9. instant, a large body of labourers, amounting to nearly sixty able-bodied men, apparently in great distress, applied at the vestry at Bremhill, near Calne, Wilts, for some relief, as it was impossible for them to subsist on what they earned. The vestry, however, refused them both assistance in money or labour, by which alone a prospect of obtaining an allowance of that necessary article, bread, might be confidently entertained. The unfortunate labourers, feelingly alive to the daily and hourly calls which their situations as heads of starving families would constantly entail on them, could not bear the prospective and agonizing idea of hearing their offspring vainly petitioning for food, and, after some consultation, they determined to apply at once to the Marquis of Lansdowne, who was most fortunately at his seat at Bowood at that particular period, for the purpose of knowing distinctly from so high and respectable authority what, in reality, they had to trust to. The labourers repaired,

"without a moment's delay, to the residence of the noble Marquis, and after stating to the steward (who was sent out to inquire into the object of their visit) their exceedingly hard and pitiable case, also very naturally added that they were determined not to starve.

"His lordship stated to them, through his steward, in reply to their humble inquiries, that the farmers were undoubtedly the proper persons to apply to for profitable employment, and that he was not aware but that his estates were let at so moderate a rent as to enable his tenants to employ all their parishioners, and to give them at the same time a fair and just price for their labour; however, at any rate he the marquis) would immediately institute proper inquiries into these circumstances, and see that all their reasonable grievances should be redressed.

"The labourers were perfectly well satisfied by this kind assurance of his lordship and went quietly to their homes; and thus were the well-grounded fears of that neighbourhood quieted by the marquis's timely interference."

GOOD NEWS

FROM THE

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

(From Nicholson's Commercial Gazette).

(From a correspondent received this morning).

New York, 23. Nov., 1834.

1. "MY DEAR FRIENDS,—You will be glad to hear that the elections in this state, which sends forty members to the House of Representatives, have terminated very much in favour of the administration. The democrats send thirty-two members to the House of Representatives for the next Congress, the scrip nobility send eight.

2. "Every possible means have been tried by the bank party to gain the election. Large sums were subscribed, and every thing that bribery

and intimidation could do, was done; but to no purpose, as they have been most signally defeated.

3. "I am happy to be able to say that the general result of the late elections shows, clearly, that the people uphold the President in his opposition to the United States Bank, as the majority in the House, in the twenty-fourth Congress, will be increased by from sixteen to twenty votes in favour of the administration.

4. "This result is particularly gratifying, as the enemies of liberty, on both sides of the Atlantic, but in France especially, were predicting a total change in our Government, and asserting that we should ere long, have a king to keep us in order. People who entertain such absurd notions, must know very little of the hard-working farmers of the interior of this country, who all cultivate their own lands, and who are well educated for men in that station of life.

5. "Were the predicted change to be attempted, a very brief period would elapse before tens of thousands of these hard-fisted boys would be on their road to Washington, each with his rifle, to 'inquire into the matter.'

6. "I have been a good deal among these people, and I know them to be straight-forward sturdy republicans, to a man, fully appreciating the excellence of our institutions, as at present existing, and determined to maintain them.

7. "The President's message will be looked for with much interest, as it is expected General Jackson will recommend the sale of the seven millions of United States Banks stock, which is the property of the Government."

Bravo! That's the thing that will bring up Sir ROBERT PEEL and his "public credit." Here is a people, an universal-suffrage people, supporting the chief magistrate against an internal aristocracy of money. The working people of England would support the King; aye, and the ancient aristocracy, too, against this money-monster in England; but these latter, that is to say, the ancient aristocracy, have resolved, it

appears, from the letter of Sir ROBERT PEEL, to uphold, and to make common cause with, the money-monster, and continue to tax the working people to the tune of half their earnings to feed this monster. This is our state; at least it is so to all appearance; and we shall now have to discuss the question, whether the industrious classes, the tradesmen, the farmers, the artisans, the labourers, ought any longer to be taxed to pay the interest of this debt; or any portion of that interest. Mr. BARING, who is one of the present Ministers, said, in the year 1821, that "*the estates of the kingdom are mortgaged to the fundholders.*" I have, twenty times over, proved the falsehood of this. If mortgaged to them, they were not, at any rate, mortgaged to pay two for one. However, let the landholders, now that they have passed the Poor-law Bill, settle this matter as they like. They cannot now pretend, that the labour ought to be taxed any longer to pay the interest of this debt! This is the shape that the discussion will now take. The Poor-law Bill has cast off the industrious classes, and flung them upon their "*own resources*"; when Mr. BARING has read my "*Legacy to Labourers*," he will know what those "*own resources*" are!

Now one word about this good news from America. By the seventh paragraph of this news, the reader will see, that the United States government are the owners of bank-stock to the amount of seven millions of dollars, and that it is reported that the President means to sell this stock? What a fine chance for our noble and honourable people who are owners of so large a part of that bank stock! How rich they will get by buying what the President is going to sell! Every reader must see what a blow here is at our ricketty concern! I can say no more. To express the pleasure that I feel at this is utterly impossible.

COVENTRY ELECTION.

WITH very great pleasure I insert the speech of Mr. WILLIAMS to the electors, made to them on Monday, the 15. of this month of December. It is with still greater pleasure, that I hear to-day, that the people, having had time to inquire and to understand matters, appear determined to elect him. Mr. ELLICE has, in fact, declined. It appears that he is in ill-health. In speaking of Mr. ELLICE, I shall never refrain from observing, that his conduct as Secretary at War was, as far as I had an opportunity of knowing, that of a humane, considerate, and just man; an opinion in which, I am sure, I have the cordial concurrence of my excellent colleague. With regard to Mr. WILLIAMS, whom I have had the honour to know intimately for several years, I hardly know a man so fit to be a representative of the people, and particularly of such a people as those of COVENTRY. He has great property at stake; no possible temptation to do that which is wrong; great knowledge in all the affairs of trade; utterly impossible for him ever to desire to touch public money in any shape or form. As intelligent and active a man as all England contains; and though he will be, certainly, one of those "*pushing men*," that Mr. ALEXANDER BARING was so afraid to see in Parliament, never will he be found to push in a direction contrary to the good and ancient institutions of the country, or to the real interests of his constituents, and the people at large. With this preface, I, with great pleasure, insert a report of his speech, which has been printed and circulated at COVENTRY.

The Speech of W. Williams, Esq., addressed to the Electors of Coventry, on his Public Entry, Monday, Dec. 12, 1834.

The carriage having been drawn up into the market-place, Mr. WILLIAMS addressed the people to the following effect: He thanked them most sincerely for the warm reception which he had met with. When he beheld the vast

assemblage of freemen who knew their rights and valued their liberties, coming forward on so important an occasion, to hear the sentiments of a man, who had come to ask their suffrages: when he saw such a noble manifestation of feeling it warmed his heart, and inspired him with hope that the people of this country were destined to see better days. (Cheers). The difficulty which he laboured under, was, that his political conduct, his unflinching opposition to every species of tyranny and oppression, was not better known to them. They might however have seen, through the press, that for the last twenty years, he had been upon every occasion one of those who not only joined, but took an active part in every public movement in opposition to misgovernment, and in every effort to keep the hands of the sinecurist and the tax-man out of the pockets of the people. (Cheers). In coming to Coventry on this occasion, he did not come precisely to oppose any other gentlemen who might have offered themselves as candidates. As private individuals he respected those gentlemen, but private virtues were not nowadays the only qualification necessary to constitute the public character. For twenty-five years he had been engaged extensively in the manufactures of Lancashire and Yorkshire, in both the home and foreign trade, and the experience which he had, enabled him to know the wants of the mercantile and manufacturing portion of the kingdom. He came therefore as one of the people, (cheers), belonging to the people, and whose every feeling was identified with the people (cheers); and if they intrusted to him the representation of their wants and wishes in Parliament, he did not hesitate to say but that he would be able to evince a thorough knowledge of their wants and interests, as manufacturers. They had tried men long enough who were unacquainted with trade and manufacture. They had tried lords, earls, 'squires, and lawyers, (laughter); and what had they done for them? they could not say nothing, they had done worse than nothing, for they found that under their representation the people

deteriorating in their condition, and their liberties abridged. The people were evidently not so well off as in former days, and there must be something wrong. (Hear, hear). Yes, they had tried these men for years in Parliament, and now that they saw and felt the consequences of their legislation, he called upon them to try one of their own class. (Cheers). He was of no party, he deprecated all party. (Cheers). The Whigs and Tories who were parties, were now ashamed of their names. And why? because they had both committed so many sins against the rights and liberties of the people, that the people were beginning to see the effects of the conduct of these two factions. In his address he had given his opinions upon many measures, which he deemed necessary to bring back England to its former glory, prosperity, and happiness. The first principle referred to in his address, was an extension of the franchise, and nothing short of household suffrage would satisfy him. (Cheers). He supported the Reform Bill, but it was in the expectation that great benefits would result from it. That bill had been tried, and what had it produced? nothing but disappointment. It had returned to Parliament, men who had increased the standing army, and who had passed that most infamous and atrocious of all measures, the Irish Coercion Act, by which their fellow men were deprived of the benefits of the constitution, by being subjected to military courts-martial, in place of that most invaluable of all blessings, trial by jury. (Cheers). Was he to give them a catalogue of the crimes of the reformed Parliament, the manner in which both Whigs and Tories played in one another's hands, they would clearly see that they had sustained the character given to them, when it was once said that this great country was crucified between two thieves. (Laughter and cheers). They had agreed to nothing only in persecuting the people, and they had disagreed in nothing only in dividing the money which they had plundered from the people. For the last four years whenever the liberties of the peo-

ple were to be abridged, they were united so closely as if they formed but one body and one essence. (Cheers). He now deemed it necessary, seeing that these men who had been returned under the Reform Act had had no sympathy with the people, that the franchise be extended. (Cheers). He proposed to go for household suffrage at least, and he hoped to see the time when education would have so far enlightened the people as to enable them to go beyond even that. They must not however go on with too great speed, for history furnished many instances where men had obtained rights which from ignorance they did not know how properly to exercise, and the consequence was that they became the prey of tyrants. Next in importance to obtaining an extension of the franchise was the repeal of the Septennial Act (cheers), because from that act proceeded all the misfortunes and misery with which the country had been afflicted. When the Stuarts, on account of their crimes, had been expelled from the throne of England, the first condition upon which William and Mary were established upon the throne was that the people should have the advantage of triennial Parliaments. For twenty-one years they enjoyed this benefit, but the Parliaments became so corrupt that they were obliged, in order to screen themselves from the nation, to pass an act prolonging the duration of Parliament to seven years. At this the people felt indignant, and having warmly expressed their feelings, the Parliaments were obliged to pass the Riot Act to save them from the just resentment of the people, so that they could then and now bring upon them their horse and foot soldiers to cut them down after one hour's warning. Thus one bad act begot another, and so on until the constitution was so frittered away and disfigured that scarce a trace of its original grandeur could be recognised. There were many who wished for annual Parliaments, but upon that point there were various opinions. If, however, the people of Coventry wished for annual Parliaments, he would take care, if they returned him as their representa-

tive, to afford them all the benefit of annual Parliaments, for he would come down within a month after the conclusion of every session, submit his parliamentary conduct to them; and if they did not approve of it, he would resign his seat. (Cheers). The next subject which he had mentioned in his address was vote by ballot; and upon this subject there was also some difference of opinion. He, however, had never heard what he considered a good argument against it. (Hear, hear). The law gave them votes to exercise without control or bias; yet it was stated in the last session by Mr. Grote, that one half of those who voted at the last election did so under the influence of coercion. They said it was an un-English practice, yet in all the great institutions of the country it was adopted. The Bank directors who exercised more power over the commercial interest of the nation than any other body were elected by ballot; and the East India Company, who governed eighty millions of human beings, were elected by it. From the highest to the lowest club in the county all used it. Lords, dukes, earls, and bishops must obtain admittance into their respective clubs and societies by the ballot; and why men should be admitted into the House of Commons without it, he was at a loss to conceive. Let them look at the working of the ballot in America, Mr. Steuart, in his travels had stated in reference to it, that in the state of New York, where 260,000 electors polled at an election, they went to the polling place with as much regularity and order, as they did to church or chapel. And it was remarkable that those states where it was not used, were the slave states; and at the election in those states drunkenness and outrage were commonly witnessed. He now came to another part of his address in which he had expressed his determination to abolish all sinecures and unmerited pensions. He had lately seen a correct list of those lady, gentlemen, and children pensioners, who were in the annual receipt of the public money, for which they had never rendered any services

to the country; and when he reflected that the vast assemblage of artisans now before him were compelled to support such a worthless tribe, he felt indignant at such gross injustice and oppression. And if they sent him to Parliament, he pledged himself never to cease or rest, until he saw that blot removed from the country. The expulsion of placemen from the House of Commons was also a thing indispensably necessary. The Bill of Rights enacted, that no person who held either place, office, or pension from the crown, could hold a seat in the Commons House. Yet in despite of this law, it appeared from a report of a committee of the reformed Parliament, that 143 members of that House were holding places under the crown. (Cries of Shame, shame). And sixty of them annually receiving 86,000*l*. There were also 312 lords, earls, honourables, and right honourables, baronets, and colonels of the army, captains of the navy, and colonels of yeomanry cavalry, all of whom, or their connexions, were partaking of the public money. Here were 455 of these gentlemen members of the House, and he would now ask, what justice or diminution of taxation could they expect from them? (Cries of None, none). It was true these gentlemen had been telling them about their intentions of doing good, but what in reality had they done? why repealed the house-tax; but pray whom had they to thank for that relief? The people of London. (Great cheering). The Government could not collect it, and good patriots like, they abandoned it. (Laughter). The fact was, the people were indebted to themselves for the repeal of that tax, and by the same spirit and determination could they expect a redress of all their other grievances. (Cheers). There was another class of their rulers which he had nearly forgotten: the privy councillors. Of these wise men there were 113 of them, who, according to Sir James Graham, divided 650,000*l*. annually of the public money. All the taxes of the country 200 years back did not amount to any thing like that sum, and then England was one of the most

powerful countries in the world. He now came to another kind of reformation which he deemed necessary; a reform in the corporations. (Cheers). He was afraid the gentlemen of the town connected with the corporation would say he was too much of a reformer on that point when he proposed to give the election of the magistrates into the hands of the people, and that once a year too. (Hear, hear). Well, in doing so he wished them no harm, nor would the change do them any, because he knew from experience that it had a good effect. In London, where the common councilmen were elected by the freemen householders, and they numbered nearly 10,000, the effect was most beneficial. It kept them up to the discharge of their duty, and there was seldom or never any necessity for to change them. (Hear, hear). And so it would be in Coventry if the magistrates were annually elected by the people as in London. He had also proposed in his address to vote for a repeal of the malt-tax, than which a more unjust tax could not be imposed upon the industry and comforts of the people. It was a tax calculated to excite the indignation of the country, for by it the poor were obliged to pay 100 per cent. upon the beer. If that was repealed, they could have their beer better for 3*d*. than they now had it for 6*d*. That, however, which aggravated this tax was the manner in which their legislature had taxed their own drink. They only taxed their own wine twenty-five per cent. whilst they taxed the poor man's ale with more than 100 per cent. (Shame). If they had had household suffrage would they have returned members to Parliament who could be so far insensible to the comforts of the poor as to impose such a tax; or would they, at the last election, have returned men capable of voting away one-half of it one night, and, with the most despicable servility, rescind their vote on the next night at the bidding of a Minister of the crown? (Cries of No, no, shame, shame). He now came to a question of much importance, and one which he particularly wished to explain himself; he meant the question of

trade, (Hear, hear). As a man of business he had applied himself to the consideration of the subject, and his decided opinion was, that it was a measure which never ought to have been introduced, and which ought long since to have been repealed. (Cheers). From the first moment that the doctrine of free trade was promulgated he looked upon it as erroneous in principle and injurious in practice. (Cheers). When the Tories brought in this bill, so jealous were the Whigs of it, that they claimed the merit of suggesting what they called this very liberal system. By this system they gave every thing to foreign nations, not one of which give any thing in return. When the late Mr. Huskisson and Mr. Spring Rice were assailed upon the subject they said, as a proof of the utility of the measure, that there was an increased consumption of goods at home and a larger amount of tonnage from British ports. This was plausible but false reasoning. They did not consider that the unnatural competition into which they had driven the nation was, as a matter of course, sure to reduce the price of the article, and consequently cause a greater consumption. But there was another consequence of the competition which they had overlooked, and that was the certain reduction in the price of labour and profits of the manufacturer which it effected. It was true, the placemen, pensioners, and sinecurists, were enabled by the competition to obtain their fancy articles and dresses for one-half the price which they formerly paid for them, and that at the expense of the miseries and heart-rending sufferings of the poor and industrious labouring artisan. (Cheers). This was a fact, no theory. The manufacturers of England with a national debt, unequalled in the annals of the world, with a load of taxation sufficient to crush all their energies, were driven by their unfeeling rulers, into competition with nations unencumbered with debt, and comparatively free from taxation. (Continued cheering). Was this justice? (No, no). Was this a system of legislation which ought to have been adopted? (No, no). And for what

was it, he would ask in the name of every principle of right, that the legislature of England should be so far blind or unfeeling as to reduce to pauperism thousands of their countrymen? Why for no other reason than to satisfy the whims of a few cold-hearted theorists, who wished to try experiments, even on the hearts' blood of the people. (Shame, shame). Well, they had tried the experiment, they had deluged the country with foreign goods, they caused an increase of machinery, which was valuable only when it facilitated labour, but always injurious when it destroyed it. (Cheers). They had placed their manufacturers at the mercy of the foreigner. They had stripped the houses of the artisan of those articles of furniture, which in time of prosperity it was his pride and pleasure to purchase; they had unclothed his children, and filled the store-room of the pawnbroker; they had broken down the hearts and spirits of the people; they had filled the workhouses; they had increased the parish rates to an extent unknown in the history of the kingdom; and having done all that, in order to save from similar misery, those who were enabled to sustain the shock, they were obliged to introduce a bill which deprived the poor of that assistance to which they were entitled. (Cheers). This was not the conduct of other Governments upon this subject. If a man in France was caught three times in smuggling he was sent to the galleys; and in Germany and all other countries they had all but excluded British manufactures. If these countries were to take English goods in return, then it would be a consideration as to the propriety of a free trade, because of the great advantages which they possessed. He had viewed the question in every way, and believing it to be fraught with immense mischief to the people, he had always been a deadly foe to it. (Hear, hear). To aid in removing this free trade he now offered his assistance to the people of Coventry, and for doing so he was told by the two parties in the town that he had no right to come. The Tories objected to him because he advocated principles to which they were opposed, and the Whigs told him he ought not to come to split the interest of the liberals and admit a Tory. This and such like were the arguments used by these parties to keep the great mass of the people from the exercise of their undoubted right to return such men as they thought proper. He however had come, regardless of all taunts, and in doing so he had no other motive than to afford the people an opportunity of expressing their opinions, freely and fully, upon all those great questions so immediately connected with their interests. He now came to another part of his address, that which referred to the standing army. They were all aware that within

the last four years the Whigs had raised an additional number of troops, than which a more odious act could not have been committed against the liberties of the people; and for what purpose was the army augmented? why to enable them to wring tithes from the famishing people of Ireland. (Applause). Would the people of England have endured such an act two hundred years back? They would not. What did Queen Elizabeth say when asked by the French ambassador where were her guards; why she referred him to the people and said, "These are my guards." Relative to the impressment in the navy, he was also opposed to that system. The navy was the pride and glory of England, and from the bravery which those men had always manifested, he had no fears but that whenever England required their services they would be found at their posts, without being dragged into the service unwilling captives. (Cheers). Next came the flogging in the army. (Cries of Shame). England was the only country in Europe where it was practised, and he should never cease in his exertions until it was abolished because of its inhuman and demoralizing tendency. With respect to the corn laws, he should also vote for either an abolition or such an alteration as would enable the poor to procure cheap food. If they looked at the *Gazette* of last Saturday, they would find that the duty on foreign corn was greater than the actual price of it. But it might be said he advocated a restriction upon foreign ribbons and why not upon foreign corn. Now he would meet an interrogatory to that effect if put to him by a positive assertion, founded upon all laws, divine and human, that no state ought under any circumstances, or to meet any exigency, enact laws to deprive the people of food. (Cheers). This was indisputable. Before, however, he repealed the corn laws he would advocate a repeal of the malt tax, which would be a saving of five millions a year to the working portion of the community, whilst it would encourage and increase agriculture, and enable the farmer to procure a remunerating price for his produce. Under the present state of things the rent of the arable land did not amount to much more than double this tax. He would repeal the present corn laws at once if possible, and lay on such moderate duty as would not materially affect the price of the poor man's loaf, and then he would gradually reduce the duty. He had now to call their attention to another question of great importance which engaged the attention of the empire, and was now being agitated in every part of the country. He alluded to the question of church reform. (Cheers). Before he proceeded on this subject he must tell them that he was a churchman, and would be one of the last men who would willingly injure or impair its usefulness. It was therefore against the abuse in the church of which he wished to speak, and to which he was going to direct their attention. The tenets of the church, the churches themselves, and

the actual property belonging to the church, he would hold sacred. In the property of the church he included the glebe lands, and the property of the deans and chapters and bishops lands, &c. The property he would leave to the church, but subject to such an appropriation of it as would ensure to the virtuous and working clergy a fair and respectable remuneration, and not to leave them, as many of them now were, in many instances worse provided for than a respectable mechanic. To effect this he would of course do away with the drones, and that iniquitous system of simony and pluralities, and he would compel every bishop or minister in the church to reside in their diocese or parish, in place of living in luxury and ease as many of them now did in France and Rome. With respect to the tithes, he should at once view them as public property, and dispose of them as such. They were in Catholic times appropriated to the benefit of the clergy and the poor; but when the religion of the country, in the reign of Henry the Eighth was changed by act of Parliament from Catholic to Protestant, then the first reformers for the worst of purposes handed over the tithes to their minions, and hence great portions of that property was now in the hands of lay impropiators. The church property had been by this transfer declared public property; for if it was not, the act of taking it from the support of the clergy, the building and repairing of churches, and last, but not least, the support of the poor, was nothing less than injustice. Before the Reformation there were none but churchmen, and if with the consent of the people, the property was so applied, their could be nothing objectionable in it; but when the people changed their religion and became Protestant, they enacted the most severe laws against the Catholics, so severe, that it was even death for a priest to be found performing mass in the country. Here then was a clear change in religion and a transfer of tithes at the will of the nation; and upon this he took his stand when he asserted, that the people now, through their representatives in Parliament, have an undoubted right to appropriate the tithes to the public services if they thought proper. As he before said, if the country was all of one opinion upon religion, and thought well of having the tithes as they were it would be all right; but now that the great mass of the people were Dissenters from the church, and derived no spiritual advantage from it, it was a different matter altogether. He should act upon the principle of doing to others as he wished to be done by, and upon that principle, he would put it to them to say, if it was in conformity with that principle, which was a fundamental part of Christianity, to compel men to pay towards the support of a religion from which they derived no advantage. They saw the respectable manner in which the dissenting congregations maintained their clergy, none of whom he dared say depending upon 50*l.* or 60*l.* a year; and was it to be said of the men-

bers of the established church that they could not, or would not support their clergy if called upon to do so. No; he did not believe they would refuse to support them, and hence he was for removing compulsory payments, which had engendered so much bad feeling and ill-will amongst professing Christians. He felt as a churchman, that it was a degradation to him to be instrumental in forcing money out of the pockets of the Dissenters for the support of a minister of religion, whose face perhaps they had never seen. He would be the last man to injure the church, but he was certain, taking into consideration the state of Ireland and the feeling in England, that unless some arrangements were made with respect to the tithes, that the church would eventually be reduced to a bad condition. The Dissenters now were a great and powerful body; they were an intelligent body; and had at present a respectable and influential committee in London, making arrangements to ascertain their strength throughout the kingdom, in order to bring it to bear in the event of an election in such a way as to ensure a proper representation of their wishes on that question, and all others affecting their interests. The churchmen, therefore, must not, by obstinately refusing to concede the just demands of the Dissenters, provoke that body; and he sincerely hoped that the churchmen would see the necessity of settling the question themselves. It was one now of great and permanent importance, to the settlement of which all thoughts were directed. It was a question of importance to Ireland, and one upon which, a gentleman of great credit had said, 20,000 human beings had been sacrificed in that country. Yes, not less than that number of lives, he believed, had been sacrificed in Ireland in the collection of tithes. The people, however, had at last settled the question, and tithes now only nominally exist there. With this effort on the part of the Irish there was, however, one thing which materially affected the people of England. When the tithes could be no longer had, the last Parliament applied one million of the public money to pay the clergy, under a positive assurance that they would appoint commissioners who would make the clergy repay it. Well, they did appoint commissioners, and they employed horse and foot soldiers to assist them, yet they were not able to get one-thousandth part of the money back, nor ever could. Tithes were, to all intents and purposes, dead in Ireland; and the question now was, would the Dissenters in England allow them to continue? No, they would not; and when the question came before Parliament, if they returned him as their representative, he should vote that it be appropriated as public property to go towards the support of the poor, to promote education in every parish, and the remainder to go into the public coffers; all of which would be followed by a proportionate reduction of taxation. In all this, however, he should scrupulously re-

gard the interests of the present clergy, and allow them a fair and just consideration for their lives, believing as he did, that not to do so would be an injustice towards them. He now came to the last topic upon which he should touch. He meant the Poor-law Amendment Bill, which was the grossest infraction upon the liberties of the people ever committed. Lord Brougham had stated in reference to it, that he supported it to enable the landlords to get their rents. He said the poor-laws eat up every thing, yet only four millions and a half of the poor-rates were really applied to the poor. Now, he (Mr. W.) was interested in the land, but sooner than he would have supported such a bill he would have let rent, land, and all perish, rather than suffer one Englishman to perish for want of that relief to which by all laws, divine and human, he is entitled. (Loud cheers). The poor man had as good a right to relief when in distress as the landlord had to his rent. This law had however been reversed by Lord Brougham, who had increased his own salary to 14,000*l.* a year, and his retiring pension from 4,000*l.* to 5,000*l.* a year. Out of 14,000*l.* a year he could not save a sufficiency to keep him when out of office, and yet he could legislate for the poor, upon the principle that the poor labourer who had to support a wife and family out of fourteen shillings a week, ought to be able to save a sufficiency to meet all the exigencies of sickness, want of employment, and old age. If they sent him to Parliament he would never rest until that bill, which was a disgrace to the country, was repealed. He would go back to the 43 statute of Elizabeth, and if there were any provisions in that act which did not answer the present state of society he would amend them, but retaining the principle. (Hear, hear). One word more, and that was with regard to Ireland. The people of England had heretofore witnessed the oppression of that country with too great indifference, nay a crime. (Shame). They had seen the people of that country enduring as they were, for centuries, under misrule and persecution, they had seen them trodden under foot long enough, and it was high time that they made common cause with them, prevent all further encroachments upon their liberties, and resist any further attempts which might be in contemplation, to give an ascendancy to any party, who by the religious feuds and animosities which they had kept alive, succeeded in rendering that country the weakness, in place of the strength of England. Ireland must no longer so be trodden down. (Cheers). It is not the wish of the people of England that she should be so. (No, no). Then let the people of England say it must not be so, and Ministry dare perpetuate their miseries. (Cheers). Having now addressed them at some length, he must return them his best thanks for the patience with which they had listened to him. (Hear, hear). His opponents would, no doubt, scrutinize his conduct and character, and in order to help them to do so,

he now publicly challenged them to show that he ever did a dishonourable act, or broke his word either in private or public during his life. This was the challenge which he gave them; and upon this character, his practical knowledge of trade, and independent fortune acquired by industry, which renders him independent of bribery or corruption, he now sought their suffrages. (Cheers). He was now about to retire from trade. And as he would consequently have sufficient time to spare, he would devote all his energies to the discharge of his parliamentary duties. He had now launched himself in the bark with the people of Coventry. He came to fight a constitutional battle of principle, and if they stood by him he would stand by them.

Mr. Nicholson and Mr. Wilkinson, of London, then addressed the freemen in behalf of Mr. Williams, whom they represented as a gentleman of honour, respectability, patriotism, and unflinching attachment to the interests of the people; after which a resolution to the effect that Mr. W. was a fit and proper person to represent the city in Parliament, and pledging themselves to support him was proposed by Mr. Buckney, and on being seconded, was carried by acclamation, without a dissentient voice.

From the LONDON GAZETTE,

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 19, 1834.

INSOLVENTS.

BROWN, W., Clifton-street, Finsbury, carpenter.
CLARK, C., Stowey, Somersetshire, chemist.
HARVEY, J., Dartford, Kent, timber-merchant.
KING, H. W., Bristol, attorney.

BANKRUPTS.

BROWN, G. B., E. R. Danson, and C. Duncan, New Broad-street, merchants.
CASEY, W., Coopers' Arms, Cow-cross-street, victualler.
CLARK, J. B., High-street, Shadwell, grocer.
CROSER, J., G. Walker, and J. C. Walker, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, ship and insurance-brokers.
JOHNSON, T., late of Petworth, Sussex, surgeon.
JONES, S., New Sarum, book-teller.
KENDRICK, J., Sidney-alley, Leicester-sq., printseller.
LANE, T., Hereford, seedsman.
OAKLEY, E., Wimborne Minster, Dorsetshire, linen-draper.
TOMLINSON, S., Liverpool, corn-merchant.
WHITTEN, J., Liverpool, merchant.

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 23.

BANKRUPTCY SUPERSEDED.

WISEMAN, I., Norwich, silk-merc.

BANKRUPTS.

BAXTER, J., Langham, Norfolk, builder.
CHAPMAN, W., Allensmore, Herefordshire, timber-merchant.
DRIVER, T., Pemell's-terrace, Peckham, merchant.
ELFORD, R., jun., Little Exeter-street, Chelsea, veterinary-surgeon.
FRASER, R., Middle Queen's-buildings, Brompton, wine-merchant.
KADWELL, W., Weston, Somersetshire, victualler.
MORRISON, R., Gloucester-street, Hoxton New-town, Middlesex, carpenter.
PYKE, T., Liverpool, corn-merchant.
WOOD, E. G., Liverpool, common-brewer.

LONDON MARKETS.

MARK-LANE, CORN-EXCHANGE, Dec. 22.—

The fresh supplies from the home counties to this morning's market were moderate, and though the arrivals reported during the past week have been large, yet being principally on the account of speculators and millers, few parcels comparatively have appeared on the stands. Fine samples were to-day saleable at fully the rates of last Monday, but all secondary and inferior descriptions were difficult of disposal, and a very limited clearance effected at the close of the market. In bonded Wheat nothing transpiring.

The extensive supplies of British Barley, which have amounted during the last fortnight to upwards of 45,000 quarters, have so much exceeded the demand, that prices have become materially depressed. To-day, however, fine Barley was rather freer sale than on Friday, realizing the prices of last Monday; grinding samples also meet inquiry, but all other sorts were very heavy sale, and little progress made in their disposal at the close of the day.

Malt very heavy sale at last week's decline of 1s. per quarter on the better qualities, and 2s. on thin samples.

The supply of Scotch Oats have been unusually extensive, but from England and Ireland only moderate. The trade ruled dull,

Scotch potato having declined fully 1s. per quarter; and seed, 6d. to 1s. Irish qualities were slow sale at a reduction of 6d. per qr. Holders of bonded Oats are still demanding high prices for their stock.

Beans dull sale, and 1s. lower.

Peas, White, as well as Grey and Maple, were also 1s. cheaper.

In bonded Spring Corn nothing transpiring, but prices nominally unaltered.

The Flour trade very languid, and ship mark realizing very low prices.

Wheat, English, White, new....	42s. to 53s.
Old	48s. to 52s.
Red, new.....	32s. to 42s.
Old	40s. to 42s.
Lincolnshire, red	37s. to 42s.
White	43s. to 45s.
Yorkshire, red	36s. to 40s.
White	40s. to 42s.
Northumberl. & Berwick	38s. to 41s.
Fine white	40s. to 43s.
Dundee & choice Scotch	43s. to 44s.
Irish, red, good.....	35s. to 36s.
White	38s. to 42s.
Rye, new	30s. to 33s.
Old ..	34s. to 36s.
Barley, English, grinding	26s. to 28s.
Distilling.....	28s. to 30s.
Mating	32s. to 36s.
Chevalier ...	37s. to 39s.
Malt	44s. to 54s.
Fine new.....	56s. to 64s.
Beans, Tick, new.....	33s. to 35s.
Old	36s. to 38s.
Harrow, new.....	36s. to 38s.
Old	38s. to 40s.
Peas, White, English	38s. to 40s.
Foreign	36s. to 40s.
Grey or Hog	38s. to 41s.
Maples.....	42s. to 43s.
Oats, Polnds	21s. to 24s.
Lincolnshire, short small	22s. to 24s.
Lincolnshire, feed	20s. to 22s.
Yorkshire, feed.....	21s. to 24s.
Black.....	23s. to 25s.
Northumberland and Berwick Potato, new.....	24s. to 25s.
Old.....	26s. to 27s.
Angus, new	23s. to 24s.
Old	25s. to 27s.
Banff and Aberdeen, common new	23s. to 24s.
Old.....	24s. to —s.
Potato	25s. to 26s.
Old.....	26s. to 27s.
Irish Potato, new.....	22s. to 23s.
Old.....	22s. to 24s.
Feed, new light	18s. to 20s.
Black, new	20s. to 21s.
Estegui seed.....	23s. to 24s.
Danish & Pomeranian, old	20s. to 21s.

Petersburgh, Riga, &c....	22s. to 23s.
Foreign, in bond, feed....	12s. to 14s.
Brew	16s. to 18s.

PROVISIONS.

Butter, Dorset	40s. to 42s. per cwt.
Cambridge	40s. to —s.
York	38s. to —s.
Cheese, Dble. Gloucester	48s. to 68s.
Single ditto....	44s. to 48s.
Cheshire.....	54s. to 74s.
Derby	50s. to 60s.
Hams, Westmoreland..	50s. to 60s.
Cumberland ...	50s. to 60s.

SMITHFIELD, December 22.

This day's supply of each kind of fat stock, was, as is usual on the Monday after the great December market, limited, but of fair average quality. Trade was, with prime Beef and prime small Veal somewhat brisk, at fully, with the middling and inferior kinds, as also Mutton and Pork, dull, at barely Friday's quotations.

About 600 of the Beasts, in about equal numbers of Herefords, Devons, and Welsh runts, with about 100 Scots, and half that number of Irish Beasts, were from Lincolnshire, Leicestershire, Northamptonshire, and others of our northern districts; about 100, chiefly Scots, with a few Devons and home-breds, from Norfolk, Suffolk, Essex, and Cambridgeshire; about 200, a full moiety of which were Devons, the remainder about equal numbers of Herefords and runts with a few Irish Beasts, from our western and midland districts; about 30, chiefly Sussex steers and oxen with a few runts, Devons, and Irish Beasts, from Kent, Sussex, and Surrey; and most of the remainder, which embraced about 50 Town's-end Cows, either first in, or as the surplus of last week's market, from the neighbourhood of London.

About a moiety of the Sheep were new Leicesters, in about equal numbers of the Southdown and white-faced crosses, about a fourth Southdown, and the remainder about equal numbers of Kents, old Leicesters and Lincolns, and Kentish half-breeds, with a few pens of horned and polled Norfolks, horned Dorsets and Somerset, horned and polled Scotch and Welsh Sheep, &c.

END OF VOL LXXXVI.

Printed by William Cobbett, Johnson's-court; and published by him at 11, Bolt-court, Fleet-street.



